

RESTRICTION OF THE SOUTH AMERICAN GENUS *ACROLYTTA* (COLEOPTERA: MELOIDAE)¹

Richard B. Selander²

ABSTRACT: *Acrolytta neivai* (Denier) is transferred to *Lytta* Fabricius, *A. nigropicta* (Denier) to *Picnoseus* Solier, and *A. weyrauchi* Kaszab to *Spastomeloe* Selander.

In preparation for a systematic revision of the species of *Acrolytta* Kaszab it is convenient to remove from the genus three species that are clearly not congeneric with the type species, *A. binotatithorax* (Pic).

Lytta neivai Denier

Lytta neivai Denier, 1940:799.

Acrolytta neivai, Kaszab, 1963:341.

This species is known definitely only from the holotype, a female, collected at Joinville, on the coast of Santa Catarina, Brazil, in 1919 and sent to Denier for description by T. Borgmeier. According to Denier (1940:800), the specimen is in the "Instituto de Experimentação Agrícola, Rio de Janeiro."

Kaszab (1959) did not include *L. neivai* in *Acrolytta* when he described the genus, but he later (Kaszab, 1963) referred to it as a member of the genus in describing *A. weyrauchi*. Yet the large size of the type of *L. neivai* (length 23 mm), its coloration (reddish yellow), the form of its pronotum (elongate, campanuliform), and its relatively wide elytra (2x as wide as the pronotum) are hardly consistent with assignment of the species to *Acrolytta*, and it is significant that in describing the species Denier compared it with *Epispasta abbreviata* (Klug) (as *Lytta*) rather than with any of the several species of *Acrolytta* then assigned to *Lytta* Fabricius.

A female of a meloid species representing a new genus, presumably of *Lyttina*, from Chapada, Mato Grosso, Brazil, in the collection of the Carnegie Museum, agrees with Denier's description of *L. neivai* in all particulars, except that the color is yellow rather than "luteo-rubra." Whether it is conspecific with the type of *L. neivai* is questionable, but it appears very likely that the two specimens represent the same genus. In any event, Kaszab's transfer of *L. neivai* to *Acrolytta* is unacceptable. Pending further study, I propose to return Denier's species to the genus *Lytta*.

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²Department of Genetics and Development, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, Urbana, IL 61801.

***Picnoseus nigropictus* (Denier), new combination**

Lytta nigropicta Denier, 1932:87, 2 figs.

Acrolytta nigropicta, Kaszab, 1959:111.

The original description of this species was based on five or more adults collected by M.P. Gómez at Nanogasta and Guanchin, La Rioja, Argentina. Denier specified 1928 as the year of collection at Guanchin (which is spelled Huanchin on the specimen labels and in Denier's article). Nanogasta and Guanchin are in the Department of Chilecito, about 15 km S and 15 km W, respectively, of the city of Chilecito.

In the original description Denier wrote "Tipo en mi colección" but referred to the remainder of his material as "co-tipos." A female in the Denier collection in the Museo de La Plata is labeled "Holotipo//Nonogasta/Rioja Gómez//C. Bruch dedit 1921." In addition, I have examined two specimens in the Bruch collection in the Museo Argentino de Ciencias Naturales "Bernardino Rivadavia," in Buenos Aires, both labeled as cotypes. Notwithstanding Denier's designation of cotypes, it is evident that he regarded the specimen in his collection as *the* type, and on this account a lectotype designation does not seem necessary.

Denier's species was included by Kaszab (1959) in his genus *Acrolytta* without comment. However, the species clearly belongs neither to *Lytta* nor to *Acrolytta* but to *Picnoseus* Solier, a pyrotine genus heretofore recorded only from Chile.

***Spastomeloe weyrauchi* (Kaszab), new combination**

Acrolytta weyrauchi Kaszab, 1963:341.

Although Kaszab suggested that this species stands nearest *Lytta neivai* (as *Acrolytta*), his description of the unique holotype (male) leaves little doubt but that *A. weyrauchi* is congeneric with *S. formosus* Selander, the type species of the meloine genus *Spastomeloe* Selander (1985). Kaszab gave the type locality as "Lomas Marcons, 540 Km zwischen Nasca [*sic*] and Yauca, 350 m," Peru. Highway distances shown on the Mapa Físico Político Vial - Peru, Tercera Edición, 1983 (Librería Internacional del Perú S.A., Lima) indicate that the Km 540 marker (from Lima) on highway #1 between Nazca and Yauca is near Puerto de Lomas, in Arequipa. On the other hand, "Marcons" is perhaps a misspelling of Marcona, the name of a mining center in Ica, near its border with Arequipa. Either way, the type locality is (in straight-line distances) about 650 km NW of the type locality of *S. formosus* at Las Yaras, Tacna, Peru, and 1300 km SE of the type locality of *S. singularis* Selander at Las Lomas, Piura, Peru.

Kaszab described the lighter color of the head, pronotum, and elytra of his type specimen as dark red, without indicating a difference in shade or intensity among these areas. Uniformity in this respect is characteristic of the unique type specimen of *S. singularis*, but the color is orange. In *S. formosus* the head and pronotum might be described as dark red, but the light color of the elytra is pure orange, not at all reddish. There are additional differences in the coloration of the venter of the body and the black margining of the pronotum that would seem to distinguish *S. weyrauchi* from both of the other species of the genus. The differences, however, are of the degree and nature that one might expect to arise in isolated populations, and I would not be surprised to find that *S. weyrauchi* is conspecific with either *S. singularis* or *S. formosus* or, for that matter, that it represents an intergrade population. However, since Kaszab provided no figures of the type specimen and no information regarding the genitalia, I am inclined for the present simply to add *S. weyrauchi* to *Spastomeloe* as a third nominal species.

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